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BABYLONIAN ASTRONOMICAL DIARIES AND CORRECTIONS OF DIODORUS¹

By M. J. GELLER

The long-awaited first volume of the astronomical diaries, the life-work of the late Abraham Sachs, has been admirably brought to fruition by Hermann Hunger, in Sachs and Hunger, *Diaries and related texts from Babylonia*.² Although one laments the passing of Abraham Sachs before the completion of this momentous task, Hunger has earned the acclaim of his colleagues for the polished presentation of the finished product, particularly as the Sachs *Nachlass* was not yet in publishable form when he died. The importance of these diaries reaches far beyond the narrow confines of philology, since they include calendrical and astronomical data, lists of commodity prices for the particular day or month, weather reports and often a tantalizing allusion to a current event, being the closest ancient counterpart to a modern news report.

In this first volume of dated diaries from 652–262 B.C., one Seleucid-period diary from 310/309 B.C. (Hunger, *Diaries*, 229 ff.) sheds new light upon contemporary historical documents. It includes several references to social conditions at the time, although the statements alone are too brief to provide much information:

- l. 9: *hat-tu₄ ina kur gar-an* ‘panic was present in the country’.
l. 12: *še-im u z[ú.lum-ma . . .] ina piš-ki ti-qí*,
‘he took barley and dates [. . .] illegally’.
l. 14: [. . .] *lú.érin.meš 'an-ti-gu-nu-su šal-tu₄ ina u[ru.bi i-pu-šu]*
‘[. . .] the army of Antigonos fought in [that] city’.

The diary is dated to the ‘7th year of Alexander IV, (when) Seleucus is General’ (rev. 11’ and upper edge), i.e. 310/309 B.C., and the reference to the city presumably implies Babylon.³

The historical information in this diary matches an extract from the Seleucid text known as the Diadochi Chronicle,⁴ one section of which describes the battle between Antigonos and Seleucus ‘in the 7th year of Alexander (IV)’ (rev. 14), i.e. the same year to which the diary cited above is dated (310/309), and both texts obviously refer to the same battle. Coincidentally, the other two diary references may also be reflected in the Chronicle passage: The diary mention of panic in the country is paralleled by the Chronicle statement that *bi-kit u si-ip-du ina kur gar-an* ‘there was weeping and mourning in the country’;⁵ both references at the very least indicate social disruption in that year. The other more specific reference is to the illegal taking of barley and dates, which appears

¹ The author gratefully acknowledges the help and advice of colleagues R. J. Van der Spek, I. L. Finkel, and Fergus Millar.

² A. J. Sachs and H. Hunger, *Astronomical diaries and related texts from Babylonia*. 2 vols. 1: *Diaries from 652 B.C.*; 11: *Plates*. (Ost. Ak. der Wiss. Phil.-hist. Kl. Denkschrift. 195. Bd.) 377 pp.; 69 plates. Wien: Verlag der Ost. Ak. der Wiss., 1988.

³ The tablet, BM 40591, has not been able to be collated since it is temporarily mislaid, but the photograph may suggest ‘e’[k] as a possible alternative, specifying that the battle was fought in Babylon.

⁴ A. K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian chronicles* (Locust Valley, NY), 1975, 115–19, especially rev. 21–31. The two sources for this chronicle, BM 36313 and BM 34660 have now been joined by I. L. Finkel, and the lacunae noted in Grayson’s transliteration represent only one line of text.

⁵ *ibid.*, l. 26.

in the Chronicle with similar wording: še I (bán) zú.l[um.ma ina]/[pišk] ti.meš, ‘barley and one *sūtu* of dates were taken [illegally]’.⁶

The Diadochi Chronicle attracted much attention after being edited by S. Smith in 1924, and an improved edition by A. K. Grayson appeared in 1975,⁷ although our own reading of the text does not coincide with either Smith or Grayson in several points in the following passage (rev. 3–8), which describes events in the year *before* the passage cited above:

1. 3. [ana² ¹si-lu-uk]-ku iq-bi um-ma mu VI.kám ¹an-ti-g[u-nu-su . . .]
¹ina² šu⁷ ¹si-lu-uk-ku ¹⁰gal.érin.meš šid.meš⁸ ^{riti} [sig/šu . . . ki]⁹
1. 5. ¹si-lu-uk-ku ¹⁰ša.tam é-mes-lam it-ta-[bal-kit-ma . . .]¹⁰
^égal šu¹¹ nu kur iti.bi ¹40² gú.un kù¹.b [abbar] ¹ša x¹ [. . .]
¹⁰ne ¹si-lu-uk-ku áš-šú ša-bat é.gal ¹e^{ki} x¹ [nu kur-šú . . .]
1. 8. iṣ-bu-ub-ma¹¹ ¹⁰buranun úl is¹-kir x [x] x x [. . .]

He said thus [to? Seleu]cus, “in the 7th year of Antigonus (= 311/310) they assigned/appointed [. . .] to Seleucus the General”. In the month of [. . .] the administrator of the Emeslam temple [in Cuthah] *rebelled* [with] Seleucus, [but . . .] he did not capture the palace (i.e. the garrison).

In that month forty talents of silver of . . . [. . .]

In the month of Ab, because [he did not accomplish the] capture of the citadel of Babylon [. . .], Seleucus took flight and did not dam up the Euphrates . . . [. . .]

The rest of the damaged section refers to the Tigris and to the troops of the Gutî (l. 12), and no historical sense can be made of the account, but the reference to Antigonus year 7 fixes the assignment of troops or official status to Seleucus before Siman 311/310.¹²

The next two sections of the Diadochi Chronicle refer to the years 310/309 and 309/308, during which time Antigonus’s army conquered Babylon and Cuthah, causing widespread mourning and weeping, and ‘plundered the city

⁶ *ibid.*, ll. 31–2. The theft of a single *sūtu* of dates would only be significant if taken from temple property, thus violating the taboo of taking food belonging to a deity; cf. *Šurpu* II 5. R. J. van der Spek (*CRRAI*, 35, Philadelphia, forthcoming) draws attention to a text from Babylon from 308/7 B.C., which records a dispute between the governor of Babylon and the *kiništu* of the Ebabbar temple of Sippar, stipulating that the Ebabbar temple must pay half of its barley crop to the royal treasury in Babylon (cf. van der Spek, *Grondbezit in het Seleucidische Rijk*, Amsterdam, 1986, 202–11). This text may also be referring to the confiscations of foodstuffs mentioned laconically in the diary and chronicle.

⁷ S. Smith, *Babylonian historical texts* (London, 1924) 124–49, and Grayson, *op cit.*, 115–19.

⁸ This reading (= *manū*) was suggested by Oelsner in *AoF*, 1, 1974, 137. This record that Seleucus was granted official status as general in Babylon in 311 explains the eventual reckoning of year one of the Seleucid Era from that year. However, R. J. van der Spek (*CRRAI*, 35, Philadelphia, forthcoming) suggests the following alternative translation of this line: ‘[Seleu]cus said thus: “The seventh year of Antigo[nus, the Strategos], they will count as [year 1 of] Seleucus, the Strategos”’. According to this view, Seleucus declared in 311 that he was replacing Antigonus as *stratēgos* of Asia.

⁹ The reading *iti* is courtesy of I. L. Finkel. Since dating to the seventh year of Antigonus is only attested until *simānu* (see n. 12), the month mentioned here must either be *Simānu* or *Du’ūzu*.

¹⁰ We would read rev. l. 21 as [. . . ana ¹an-ti-gu-nu-su *ibbalkit-ma*, ‘[. . .] rebelled [against] Antigonus’. The use of the logogram *bal* in l. 21 for *nabalkutu* does not necessarily rule out the restoration of the syllabic writing *it-ta-[bal-kit]* in rev. l. 5, where the scribe may have needed to fill the line.

¹¹ Grayson’s translation ‘was in a frenzy’ <*zabābu* is problematic since the term is only attested in the IV-stem (*CAD*, Z.1), but his rejection of *šabābu* is unwarranted, since the latter term can simply mean ‘to fly’ (cf. *CAD*, Š.2b), which is normally metaphoric for fleeing as well; cf. the analogous term *napsu* ‘to fly, flee’ (*CAD*, N¹.314).

¹² Oelsner, *AoF*, 1, 1974, 139, in which he shows that in 310/311 the dating of documents changed in *Simānu* between seventh year of Antigonus to the sixth year of Alexander IV.

and steppe' (*hubut^u āli u šēri ihbut*), and a new satrap was appointed over Babylon.¹³ At this point the Chronicle ends.

The major problem is to identify these events in Diodorus Siculus, the main Classical source for the period. It turns out to be impossible to trace the relations between Antigonus and Seleucus between 316 and 301 B.C. if one relies upon Diodorus's account. The following table illustrates the chronological and historical problems:

317/316 B.C.

Antigonus and Seleucus have a falling out in Babylon, and Seleucus flees to Ptolemy (XIX.55).

315 B.C.

Demands are put to Antigonus that Seleucus be reinstated as satrap of Babylon, but nothing comes of it (XIX.57); later that year Seleucus commands an Egyptian fleet (XIX.58).

312 B.C.

Ptolemy and Seleucus defeat Demetrius at Gaza (XIX.80–85). Seleucus returns and captures Babylon (XIX.90–92). Later in the same year, however, Seleucus withdraws to Media, since Demetrius, on Antigonus's orders, finding Babylon abandoned, captures and plunders the city (XIX.100).

311 B.C.

A treaty was arranged between all of the warring Diadochi, without mentioning Seleucus (XIX.105).

307/306 B.C.

Antigonus assumes the crown, followed by Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Cassander, and Seleucus,¹⁴ who by now controlled the Upper Satrapies, which included Babylon (XX.53). Seleucus founds Seleucia (XIX.47), confirming that he was back in control of Babylon.

301 B.C.

Antigonus is defeated and killed at Ipsos.

There are a number of difficulties with this scheme of events, which has hitherto served as the basis for Seleucid history. The initial problem which has troubled historians is why Seleucus's name is omitted from the Treaty of 311, which is difficult to reconcile with the dating of the Seleucid Era beginning in 311.¹⁵ The second difficulty is trying to determine from Classical sources when Seleucus finally returned to Babylon, since it is unlikely that Antigonus would have abandoned the city and region without a fight.¹⁶ Since Diodorus usually dwells on the details of military engagements, we are forced to conclude that he had no information on this event.

The third problem is in Diodorus's account of Seleucus's brief conquest of

¹³ Grayson, *Chronicles*, 118: 27 and 30–31. Cf. J. Oelsner, *AoF*, 1, 1974, 129–51, W. Tarn and G. Griffiths *Hellenistic civilisation* (London, 1974), 10, and E. Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique* (Nancy, 1966), 58.

¹⁴ Seleucus took the title 'King Seleucus' only in 305 B.C., as recorded in the Hellenistic King List (Wiseman and Sachs, *Iraq*, 16, 1954, 205); the astronomical diaries of 309 and 308 B.C. still refer to Seleucus as 'general' (¹⁶gal.érin.meš), while those from 289 B.C. onwards refer to him as king, with the intervening years not being represented. Cf. Diodorus, XX.53.

¹⁵ Will, *ibid.*, 54, argues that since Seleucus by 311 was already in the process of conquering the 'Upper Satrapies' (Diodorus's term), he no longer required Ptolemy's protection, which left Ptolemy free to make peace with Antigonus. This solution does not solve the problem of when Seleucus actually returned to Babylon, which must have been a necessary precondition to establishing his legitimacy in Babylonia, and hence the dating of the Seleucid Era.

¹⁶ Will, *ibid.*, 58 assumes that by 308 B.C. Antigonus, involved with wars in the West, had abandoned his conflict with Seleucus. There is no record in Diodorus of Seleucus's actual return to Babylon in 308, but the cuneiform evidence for such a battle between Antigonus and Seleucus is given below.

Babylon ascribed to 312 B.C., which has all the hallmarks of a passage quoted out of context.¹⁷ Diodorus, XIX.90–92 records that Seleucus returned to Babylon with Ptolemy's limited assistance, and soon found loyal supporters among Babylonians and disaffected Macedonians, since Seleucus had served for four years as satrap in Babylonia. Seleucus's popularity was enhanced by an omen that the god had greeted him as *σέλευκον βασιλέα* 'king Seleucus', implying that Seleucus possessed a king's stature and royal reputation (XIX.92.5).

The complete victory implied by this account contrasts starkly with the events described by Diodorus almost immediately afterwards, that Demetrius came to Babylon at Antigonus's bidding and found that Seleucus had abandoned the city (Diodorus XIX.100). Furthermore, the omen referring to Seleucus's kingship appears anachronistic in 312 B.C., since none of the Diadochi adopted royal titles until 307/306 B.C., and Seleucus himself only in 305 (see n. 14). Finally, the description of events in Diodorus does not tally with the cuneiform record of protracted battles between Antigonus and Seleucus between the years 311–308 B.C., known from the Diadochi Chronicle discussed above; knowledge of these events is completely lacking in Diodorus if one accepts the conventional dating of his account.

This last difficulty is partially alleviated, however, if one assigns Diodorus, XIX.100 to the events of 310–308 B.C., namely, Demetrius's invasion of Babylon as a reflection of the wars recorded in the Diadochi Chronicle. According to Diodorus, Demetrius finds Babylon deserted by Seleucus, and Seleucus's general ordered an evacuation of the city, 'using the river courses and canals as defences' (100.6); Demetrius captured one of the 'citadels' and had his soldiers plunder it (100.7).¹⁸ This account accords well with the Diadochi Chronicle report of Seleucus's presumed revolt against Antigonus, his escape, and the subsequent wars in which Babylonia was plundered by Antigonus's armies.

The sources can likewise be reconciled if one assumes that Diodorus, XIX.91–92 (recounting Seleucus's capture of Babylon) refers to the events of 308/307 B.C., and not 312/311.¹⁹ The date of 308/307 for Seleucus's final

¹⁷ cf. S. Smith, *RA*, 22, 1925, 195, in which he cites a letter from W. Tarn suggesting the possibility of Diodorus's dating being a year too soon. Likewise, R. M. Geer notes for Diodorus, XX.100 that Demetrius's campaign 'should, perhaps, be placed in 311 B.C.' (Loeb Classical Library, Vol. x, 1944, 105²).

¹⁸ The Diadochi Chronicle states that Seleucus was forced to flee (presumably from Babylon), that he did not dam the Euphrates, and that he probably allied himself with the Gutí (Grayson, *Chronicles*, 117: 7–12), which may agree with Diodorus's account of Seleucus's flight from Demetrius (Diodorus, XIX.92.5, 100.5), in which Seleucus initially attracted allies from Media, and used the Tigris and Euphrates as defences against Demetrius's army. Nevertheless, Diodorus's account is confused, describing both Seleucus's overwhelming success in capturing Babylon juxtaposed with his flight from Demetrius's army. It is possible that Diodorus was conflating two events, namely, Seleucus's initial challenge to Antigonus's hegemony and his later eventual capture of Babylon.

Seleucus's appearance in Babylon in 311 may have been a relatively simple coup. The previous satrap of Babylon, Pithon, had been appointed by Antigonus in 316 B.C. to replace Seleucus (Diodorus XIX.56.4), but Pithon was killed in 312 B.C. at the Battle of Gaza (XIX.85.2), leaving no satrap in Babylon.

¹⁹ There is no record in the Diadochi Chronicle of Seleucus's victory, since the tablet records events only as far as 309/308 B.C. (Alexander IV, year 8), before the outcome of the war was settled. Evidence for the continuation of the battles during 309/308 B.C. appears in the final lines of the Diadochi Chronicle on the left edge: [...^mA-r]i-is-ki-la-mu^u u^u ^uerim.meš ^mAn-ti-gu-nu-su a-n[a.....] ^une ud 25^u.[kám x]-[x^u]-ku šal-tu^u ina igi ^uerim.meš ^mSi-lu-uk-ku [i-pu-šu....] '... Ariskilamu and Antigonus's troops [went] towards [...] in the 25th^u of Abu [...], they [fought] a battle against Seleucus's troops [...]. The 'Ariskilamu' mentioned here had been appointed by Antigonus as satrap of Babylon in the previous year (Diadochi Chronicle, rev. 28 = Grayson, *Chronicles* 118:30, reading [^ma^u-ri-is-ki-la-mu, courtesy I. L. Finkel). We would tentatively identify Ariskilamu with Arkesilaüs (*Ἀρκεσίλαος*), appointed as satrap of Babylon earlier in 323 (Diodorus XVIII.3), and perhaps recalled in 311 to replace Pithon.

conquest of Babylon would conform with Diodorus's other reference to the founding of Seleucia in 307 B.C., which would be only shortly prior to Seleucus's adoption of the royal title in 305, when texts begin to be dated to his reign.²⁰ This reconstruction assumes that Seleucus's rise to power post-dated the Treaty of 311 B.C., which is why his name was omitted from amongst the signatories.²¹

To accept Diodorus's account of events in 312–311 B.C., one must assume that Demetrius's defeat at Gaza by Ptolemy and Seleucus in 312 (XIX.80–86) weakened Antigonus's position sufficiently to allow Seleucus to capture Babylon briefly, before being forced to flee. There are difficulties with this scenario: (1) Seleucus was never referred to by Diodorus as *stratēgos* in the battle of Gaza, and his official position was ambiguous. (2) The battle of Gaza was hardly decisive, since Demetrius drove Ptolemy from Coele-Syria in the same year (XIX.93). (3) There is no corroboration of Diodorus's romanticized story (XIX.90–92) of Seleucus's triumphant entry into Babylon in 312, since the Diadochi Chronicle only states that Seleucus revolted against Antigonus, together with the temple administrator of Cuthah, but they did not manage to capture the 'palace' (i.e. citadel) and were forced to flee. The precise circumstances surrounding Seleucus's appointment to the title of *stratēgos* (lúgal.érin.meš) are unclear.

Finally, the confusion in Diodorus's account can be further substantiated by another cuneiform source, which has not yet been assigned to its correct historical context. The text is one section of the so-called 'Dynastic Prophecy', BM 40623 v 9–23, which is assumed by A. K. Grayson, *Babylonian historical-literary texts*, (Toronto, 1975), 24 ff. (given as col. iii), to refer to Alexander the Great:

lúérin.meš ^{ma}ha-ni-i 'x' [. . .]
 zi.meš 'x' [x] 'x' -tú [. . .]
 lúérin¹.m[eš-šú]
 'hu¹-bu-ut-su i-hab-ba-t[ú šil-lat-su]
 i-šal-la-lu ár-ka-nu lú[érin.meš-šú]
 ú-kaš-šar-ma giš.tukul.meš-šú í[l]
 den-lil^dutu u^d[marduk . . .]
 da lúérin.meš-šú du.[meš-ma]
 su-kup-tu lúérin.meš ha-ni-i 'í'-[šak-kan]

The troops of the Hanî [. . .]
 will rise up and [.],
 they will loot and plunder
 it. Afterwards he will muster his army
 and raise his weapons.
 Enlil, Šamaš, and [Marduk . .]
 will go with his army,
 and he will [bring about] the defeat of the Hanî troops.

²⁰ Oelsner, *AoF*, 1, 1974, 139.

²¹ This assumes that the title of *stratēgos* carried more political weight than the title of 'satrapēs', and that Seleucus only acquired the title of *stratēgos* after the Treaty of 311. Van der Spek, in fact, suggests that Seleucus's adoption of the title of general was a reaction to his being excluded from the Treaty of 311 (see n. 8 above).

Seleucus had been appointed as commander of the cavalry in 323 (Diodorus, XVIII.3), and satrap of Babylonia (but not including the Upper Satrapies and Mesopotamia) in 320 (ibid., XVIII 39.5, Grayson, *Chronicles*, 116:9). In 316, however, when Antigonus demanded to examine his revenues, Seleucus refused and effectively resigned his satrapy by fleeing to Egypt (ibid., XIX.55). There is a discrepancy in Diodorus's account of this incident, since elsewhere he records that Seleucus had been driven from Babylonia, rather than voluntarily abandoning his position (XIX.5). There may be an oblique reference to this event in the Diadochi Chronicle 17–18, which records that in 317/316 more Hanî (Macedonians) were brought into Babylonia, probably by Antigonus, to reinforce the garrisons (Grayson, *Chronicles*, 116).

The text goes on to mention that the victor will collect spoils, while the people will rejoice, with their misfortunes now reversed.

Grayson already noted (*ibid.*, 26) the difficulty of ascribing the passage to Alexander the Great, which on one hand seems logical since it follows directly upon the demise of Darius III (*ibid.*, 11. 6–8) but, on the other hand, the text also appears to imply the *defeat* of Alexander's army at the hands of the Babylonians. Grayson found no solution to this problem.

It is extremely unlikely that these lines refer in fact to Alexander's defeat of Darius at Gaugamela, an event which is actually referred to in an astronomical diary of 331/330 B.C. The reference to booty and plunder in the Dynastic Prophecy seems to be inconsistent with Alexander's behaviour, since the diary of 331/330 specifically records an order from Alexander to the people of Sippar in which he says, [*ana-k*]u a-na é.meš-ku-nu ul er-ru-bu 'that I shall not enter your homes', implying the very opposite of plunder.²²

The greater likelihood is that these lines in the Dynastic Prophecy refer rather to the two wars between Antigonus and Seleucus, both in 310–308 and 307 B.C.²³ The first few lines of the passage refer to Antigonus's victory in 309 and his plundering of Babylon, as attested both in Chronicle 10 and the diary of 309. The second section, introduced by the word *arkānu* 'afterwards', refers to Antigonus's defeat by Seleucus, and the mention of the rejoicing of the Babylonians and their reversal of fortune accords well with Diodorus's own account (XIX.91). This interpretation of the passage not only fits the available evidence, but avoids the difficulty raised by Grayson of a defeat of Alexander the Great by the Babylonians.

The fact that Antigonus's army is referred to as *Hanî* is hardly problematic. It is true that the astronomical diaries refer specifically to Alexander III as *lugal šá ta mat Ha-ni-i* (325 B.C., Hunger, *Diaries*, 190), but the same term could as easily apply to Antigonus's own army from Asia Minor. The Diadochi Chronicle, in fact, refers to Philip's army as *ha-ni-i*, with Antigonus mentioned in the same context as his general, which matches the historical record.²⁴ It therefore appears that—to the author of the Dynastic Prophecy—the wars between Antigonus and Seleucus were the most significant events of the era, even overshadowing Alexander the Great's defeat of Darius, since Seleucus's rise had a more immediate impact on the affairs of Babylon itself.²⁵

²² Hunger, *Diaries*, 178 (restoration courtesy I. L. Finkel). The reference to plunder in the Dynastic Prophecy (l. 12, *hubussu ihabbatū*) corresponds closely to the text of the Diadochi Chronicle rev. 27 which states that Antigonus's army *hubur" āli u šēri ihbut* 'plundered city and steppe'.

²³ The second section in the Dynastic Prophecy (ll. 13–23) could alternatively refer to the defeat of Antigonus at Ipsos by the combined forces of the Diadochi, for Seleucus was already preparing his army in 302 B.C. (Diodorus, XX.113); cf. Hunger, *Diaries*, 248, rev. 5–6, a diary for 303/302 B.C., includes the statement that : 1 me 13 gun kù-babbar 2 gun kù.gi šá dag šá ina igi 'x' [. . .] /é um-ma-nu u sila.meš šá Bar-sip-ki [i]t-tar-ru-ú 'x' [. . .], '113 talents of silver and 2 talents of gold of Nabû before the . . . [. . . from] the craftsmen's house and streets of Borsippa which they confiscated . . .'. The reference could be to temple funds being taken to finance the final battle against Antigonus. Nevertheless, the point of the Dynastic Prophecy is the restoration of Babylon itself, rather than simply the defeat of Antigonus, and is likely to be referring to Seleucus's battle to capture the city.

²⁴ Grayson, *Chronicles*, 116:17–18, and Tarn and Griffith, *op. cit.*, 7.

²⁵ The omission of Alexander the Great from the Dynastic Prophecy can be understood from the point of view of this text, which is primarily concerned with those events directly affecting the fate of Babylon. Alexander's brief rule was less threatening to Babylon than Antigonus's hegemony, and the Babylonian attitude towards Antigonus can also be detected in Hieronymus (*apud* Diodorus), who refers to Antigonus as an arrogant tyrant, cf. J. Hornblower, *Hieronymus of Cardia* (Oxford, 1981), 213 f.

The main sources, therefore, for Seleucus's early activities are as follows:²⁶

- 311–310 Diadochi Chronicle, rev. 1–13
Diodorus, XIX.90
- 310–308 Diodorus, XIX.100
Diadochi Chronicle, rev. 14–42 and left edge
Dynastic Prophecy, iii (= v), 9–13
Astronomical diary, – 309
- 307 Diodorus, XIX.91–92
Dynastic Prophecy, iii (= v), 13–23

J. Hornblower has argued that in his history of Alexander's successors, Diodorus omitted some events entirely (such as the wars between Seleucus and Antigonus), while elaborating less important events in great detail.²⁷ It would not be implausible to assume that Diodorus got his dates wrong, and ascribed an event from 307 B.C. to 312 B.C., in order to fill up the gaps. Judging from the nature of his patchwork history, drawn from accounts of events in disparate parts of Alexander's empire, such an error in Diodorus would seem quite plausible.

²⁶ The battle between Demetrius and Seleucus received a passing mention in Plutarch's *Lives*, Demetrius, vii, in which Seleucus was only temporarily expelled by Antigonus from Babylonia; later, while Seleucus was fighting in the East, Demetrius invaded Babylonia and plundered it, but then withdrew to the coast, leaving Seleucus more strongly entrenched in Babylonia than before. This account is even less detailed than Diodorus, and cannot be considered as reliable as the cuneiform evidence.

²⁷ *Hieronymus*, 97 f.